

# the BLUEPRINT

Habitat for Humanity of Douglas County's Newsletter  
Winter 2018



## Home Is a Wonderful Place to Be



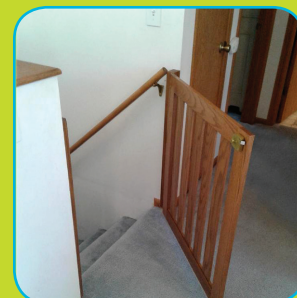
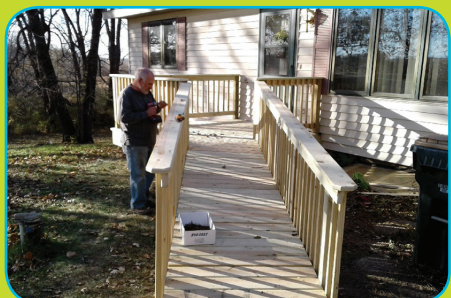
*Don Larsen*

**Don Larsen**, 87, has lived in his home near Osakis for the last 22 years. Like many of us, he enjoys the simple things homeownership has to offer: his neighborhood, independence, and the ability to feed and watch birds outside his home. Having grown up on the same land, his home is where he wants to remain, but with a sagging deck and large step in the entrance, it was becoming difficult for Don to manage his walker and safely get in and out of his home.

Don's daughter heard about Habitat's new Aging in Place program and reached out on his behalf. After learning that the scope of work was within the program's services, Don filled out an application and was approved for work to begin.

Led by volunteer **Tom Fleming**, more than 20 volunteers worked for six days to rebuild Don's front deck, his back deck, install a gate near his indoor stairs, and put grab bars in the bathroom. He now has two solid, new decks with "walker-friendly" thresholds, and a greatly reduced risk of falling throughout his home.

Thanks to the Aging in Place program supported by donors and volunteers, Don can be near wildlife and continue his independence – which is exactly where he wants to be.



Word of mouth continues to be Habitat's best source for referrals, so if you, or someone you know would benefit from the services of the Aging in Place or homeownership programs, please contact Sara at 320-762-4255. If you would like to financially support the Aging in Place program, simply write Aging in Place on the memo line of your check or on the remittance envelope.



## From the Executive Director

I am so thankful for the 13 volunteers who participated in the Vietnam Big Build. They gave of their time and resources to travel and participate in a different culture and volunteer alongside the family. Whether our volunteers are on foreign or on US soil – Habitat's impact remains the same. Habitat homeowners achieve the strength, stability, and self-reliance they need to build a better life for themselves and their families. When we volunteer on a global mission, we come back with new energy, new ideas, and new friends. If you would like to get involved in a global build – please contact me.

As we prepare for the holiday season, we have so much to be thankful for. On pages 1 and 4, you can read about the impact of our mission. Because you share your time and resources with Habitat Douglas County, together we can create homes for more families. Thank you for giving generously to Habitat Douglas County this year.

With gratitude,

*Lori Andersson*



## The ReStore's New Entrance and Wake Up Alexandria Drew Great Turnout

Over 150 people came out to celebrate the ribbon cutting for the new ReStore entrance on the south side of the building during Wake Up Alexandria on October 19, 2018. The new entrance offers the ReStore greater visibility from N Nokomis, in addition to more parking spaces.

Habitat would like to thank and recognize the donors who provided funding to purchase the land: **Otto Bremer Foundation, American National Bank, Alexandria Industries, Mammel Family Foundation, Aagard, Geneva Capital, Jeffery and LuAnn Golberg and the Blade family.**



In-kind donors include: **Alex Rubbish & Recycling, Central Specialties, Ferguson Bros. Excavating Inc., Hagstrom Engineering, Pemberton Law Firm, Sherwin Williams, Seph Construction and Stoeckel Jahner Surveying, Inc.**

If you haven't already, come on over to 1211 N Nokomis NE to check it out!



# Habitat Board and Team Members Volunteer in Kensington

The Habitat for Humanity Board of Directors and Team members picked up some hammers and fastened on hard hats to help build the Kensington home back in September. This was the first of what will become an annual team building event.

Executive Director **Lori Anderson** said, *"Our team decided it was important to take time to do the exact thing we ask of other businesses and organizations in our community. In today's busy world, time is tough to come by, but we can guarantee it is well spent on a Habitat build site. The relationships and camaraderie built with other volunteers and the homeowners is truly special."*



*Habitat Board, Crew Leaders and Team Members with Future Homeowners Olimjon and Dilorom.*

*"Every single volunteer role is crucial for the Habitat organization - whether it's in the office, the ReStore, on a committee, the Board of Directors, helping with events, or other behind the scenes duties - but there's something almost magical about being on the build site working alongside a future homeowner,"* shared **Molly Comer**, Habitat Community Engagement Coordinator.

**Stephanie Lucy**, Habitat Director, stated, *"It was a blessing to participate in our annual team build day. Not only did I get the opportunity to spend a worthwhile day with fellow board members, more importantly, I got to spend time with the future homeowners, building side by side. In the end, providing a fraction of the help needed to provide someone in need a place to call home."*

**Tony Loosbrock**, Habitat Director, reflected, *"My first Habitat build day was so rewarding. Seeing the abilities and patience of the Habitat Douglas County crew to teach, direct and manage a group of volunteers that have a wide range of skills was just one of many positive takeaways. To build, bond and be with the future homeowners, fellow board members and Habitat Douglas County staff left me smiling at the end of the day."*

This volunteer day, like any other, wouldn't be possible without the commitment and dedication of our many crew leaders. To them, we extend our greatest thanks! If you would like to get your business or organization involved on a build, please contact Molly at [molly@hfhdouglascounty.org](mailto:molly@hfhdouglascounty.org).



## Brandon Dedication



**Katie and Robert's family** celebrated their home dedication on October 23, 2018 surrounded by friends, family, and many Habitat volunteers and supporters.

A special shout-out to Brandon Manor Homes, who helped sponsor this home with a \$30,000 gift. Katie shared,

*"Having our own home in Brandon is something that is still hard to put into words. It's more than a home; it's a place where our kids can run, play, learn, grow and prosper. Not only do we have a yard, but just down the street there's a fun little park the kids can use. In minutes they can hop on the bike trail and visit their grandparents. At the end of each day, we have the space to all sleep under one roof. It's a place of stability, knowing we will be here for many years to come."*

## Save the date for Katelynn's dedication ceremony!



# celebrate with us!

### Katelynn's Family Dedication

Tuesday, January 29, 2019 – 4:00 pm

1900 Timber Lane, Alexandria

A light meal will be served following the ceremony.



Katelynn's home marked our 17th home built in partnership with Thrivent Builds. Throughout the course of the build, over 210 volunteers contributed 2,000+ hours alongside Katelynn to help complete her home. Thrivent representatives and members could be found at each and every stage of the build, including construction, providing lunch, and sharing devotions.

We are so grateful for Thrivent's support, including over \$1.3 MILLION locally, in addition to their volunteer engagement. In 2019, Habitat Douglas County has been approved for a Thrivent Faith Build, and we look forward to partnering with even more churches and congregations to help the build come to fruition! Stay tuned for more details.



## Two Reasons to Celebrate

**Randy Hansen**, Habitat's Construction Manager, recently celebrated his 5 year work anniversary! We are so grateful for his leadership surrounding permits, subcontractors, materials and building codes, along with his oversight and management of volunteers on the build site.



*Randy Hansen*

His role has helped Habitat Douglas County earn the spot as #10 in the NATION amongst 518 small affiliates for the construction of new and rehabbed homes based on five year construction trends! This is a huge designation to celebrate, and it wouldn't be possible without the tremendous support of donors and volunteers in our community.

## 2019 Women Build Planning Underway



We are currently recruiting volunteers interested in helping with the 2019 Women Build home! If you or someone you know is interested in helping with construction, providing treats or meals, sharing devotions, or being a site host, please contact Molly at [molly@hfhdouglascounty.org](mailto:molly@hfhdouglascounty.org).



## Give a Gift That Lasts This Holiday Season

Thirty people in Douglas County were able to build or improve their home in 2018 with Habitat for Humanity thanks to you, our donors and volunteers!

We are excited to share that plans are in place to increase our impact in 2019 by working with at least three families for homeownership, and over ten families through the Aging in Place program. We can't do it without your support!

Help Habitat finish the year in a strong financial position to serve families in 2019 by giving a gift today. There is no place like HOME for the holidays!





# Vietnam Volunteers Build Homes and Friendships



The 14 volunteers who built homes with Habitat Douglas County in the Dong Thap Province of Vietnam are back home safe, sound, and with full hearts. They were joined by 230 volunteers from around the world to build 21 homes for families living in poverty. Members of the Douglas County team reflected their thoughts throughout the trip via the Habitat website's blog.

**Jonathan Reckford**, CEO of Habitat for Humanity once stated, *"Habitat for Humanity is all about changing lives: starting with yours and mine."* I think each and every volunteer who spent the week building with families in the Dong Thap province would agree that the impact isn't only on the family improving their housing situation, but on each of us as well. How we see the world, poverty, and different cultures are forever changed for the better.

Check out [hfhdouglascounty.org/news-events/newsroom.html](http://hfhdouglascounty.org/news-events/newsroom.html) to read the full blog posts!



**Rose Shorma** shared, *"We were honored to be able to spend some time visiting with the couple who will be living in the home we are building. They are among the poorest of the poor, yet their eyes and hearts are rich with kindness. The owner's wife, Kinh, was diagnosed with ovarian cancer, so they have many additional expenses for her treatment, as well as the loss of her income. They sold the little rice paddy area that they owned, so their oldest son could attend the University in Saigon. They realize their only hope out of poverty is through education of their children. As human beings we all yearn to take care of our families by providing the basic needs. They are giving up so much so their children can attend extra schooling. Their son-in-law is also working side by side with us, all day, and late into the evening. What hard working people they are."*





**Tom Sinning** recapped his experience, “As the week went on, we began to tease and treat each other as special brothers and sisters. Those moments of jokes and laughter were the best balm that could be offered for our sweaty faces and achy muscles.

One day the skies clouded up and a torrential tropical downpour was upon us. While we waited out the storm, we shared stories and compared heights, all the time laughing and binding ourselves to each other with gentleness, humility and patience as we waited for the rain to stop.

What a gift to our connections to have that storm bring us closer to each other. To force us to take the time to laugh and joke to see the joy and kindness reflected in each other’s faces. To see the unity of the Spirit in each other’s humanity.”

“This is my first build with Habitat outside the United States. While the typical choir of hammers maybe absent from the site, it is easy to see that the trowels are singing quite nicely (and joined in harmony with the roosters, chickens and ducks that keep us company) and another successful Habitat build is underway. Community is being built, a family will have a decent place to call home, and our hearts will forever be changed from the sounds coming from the House 10 build site,” wrote **Kristen Sand**.



“Coming to Vietnam and being involved in the Big Build was one of the highlights of my life. We all learned so much about the country and some of its people. We arrived as strangers but left as friends. Some of us worried that we might experience some hostility because of the Vietnam War. In contrast, we encountered kindness, warmth, friendship, gratitude and even love. I met new friends on the build that love these experiences so much they have participated twice, five times, and one young person who has been on nine Big Builds. It really is a life-changing experience,” noted **Dave Anderson**.



This year’s participants on the Douglas County team included **Lori Anderson, Dave Anderson, Tanya Boser, Paul Christopher, Pete Christopher, Clarke Comer, Molly Comer, Tim Erickson, Lorna Kruthers, Jill Manlove, Carolyn Paul, Rose Shorma, Kristen Sand** and **Tom Sinning**. If you are interested in learning more about volunteering internationally, please contact our office at 320-762-4255 or [info@hfhdouglascounty.org](mailto:info@hfhdouglascounty.org).



Lori Anderson and Molly Comer with  
Habitat International CEO  
Jonathan Reckford



1211 N Nokomis NE  
Alexandria, MN 56308

### OUR *Mission*

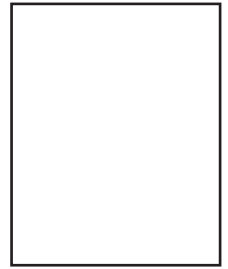
Seeking to put God's love into action, Habitat for Humanity brings people together to build homes, communities and hope.

### OUR *Vision*

A world where everyone has a decent place to live.

### OUR *Core Values*

- **Compassion.** Acting with selflessness to demonstrate Christ's love.
- **Stewardship.** Serving others with the gifts entrusted to us.
- **Relationships.** Building community through meaningful partnerships.
- **Family.** A foundation of love and safety.
- **Optimism.** Empowering hope and possibility.



## Annual After Christmas Party Set for January 12, 2019

Save the date for Habitat's annual After Christmas Party on Saturday, January 12, 2019. At 5:00 pm social hour will begin with the ReStore open for shopping. At 5:30 pm dinner will be served with a short program.

Dinner will be provided, so this year simply bring yourself, your family, and a cheerful Christmas spirit – no potluck items necessary!

A graphic of a Christmas tree made of horizontal strings of red and blue lights. At the top is a small house icon. The text "JOIN US FOR A CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION!" is written in large, green, sans-serif capital letters across the middle of the tree.

JOIN  
US FOR A  
CHRISTMAS  
CELEBRATION!

